

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 01011 01 OF 02 031325Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 CEA-01 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 CIEP-01 STR-04 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01

OMB-01 IGA-02 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 /089 W

----- 026503

O P 031222Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2463

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 1011

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EEC GR

SUBJECT: GREEK-EC RELATIONS: GOG PROTEST TO EC AMBASSADORS AND

GOG DENIAL OF ALLEGED US ROLE IN COMMISSION REPORT

REF: A. ATHENS 979; B. ATHENS 942; C. ATHENS 916

1. SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 31 PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS
DELIVERED A STRONG PROTEST TO THE AMBASSADORS OF THE
EC MEMBER STATES ON THE EC COMMISSION REPORT CONCERNING
GREECE'S APPLICATION FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY.

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 01011 01 OF 02 031325Z

THE PRIME MINISTER OBVIOUSLY ACTED WITH ANGER OVER THE

COMMISSION'S REFERENCE IN ITS OPINION TO GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES AND ITS CALL FOR AN UNSPECIFIED WAITING PERIOD FOR GREEK ACCESSION. ALSO, AND ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE REACTIONS BY THE OPPOSITION TO THIS DEVELOPMENT, HE APPARENTLY WAS TRYING TO STEAL THEIR THUNDER.

2. MEANWHILE, THE FUROR IN THE GREEK PRESS OVER THE COMMISSION'S REPORT PERSISTED OVER THE WEEKEND, INCLUDING CONTINUED ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING SUPPOSED US INFLUENCE IN THE MATTER. AS A RESULT, THE GOG ISSUED TWO STATEMENTS DENYING DIRECT OR INDIRECT US INVOLVEMENT IN THE QUESTION OF GREECE'S EC ENTRY OR THAT THERE ARE ANY STRINGS ATTACHED TO US AID (REF A). THE EMBASSY ALSO ISSUED A STATEMENT (SEPTEL). END SUMMARY.

3. IN JANUARY 31 MEETING WITH AMBASSADORS OF SEVEN EC MEMBER STATES REPRESENTED HERE (WITH CHARGE REPRESENTING DUTCH), PM CARAMANLIS LODGED A STRONG PROTEST AGAINST THE EC COMMISSION'S REPORT ON GREEK'S APPLICATION FOR EARLY ACCESSION. IN A FORTY-FIVE MINUTE REVIEW OF OFFICIAL GREEK REACTION, THE PM CHARACTERIZED "CERTAIN POSITIONS" OF THE COMMISSION AS "POLITICALLY AND MORALLY UNACCEPTABLE." HE STATED THAT THE EC GOVERNMENTS HAD ENCOURAGED THE GREEK REQUEST FOR EARLY ACCESSION WITHOUT ATTACHING CONDITIONS, AND STRESSED HIS HOPE THAT THE MEMBER STATES WOULD RECTIFY "THE MISTAKE OF THE COMMISSION" IN THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. HE CONCLUDED BY INDICATING THAT GREECE DID NOT SEEK TO FORCE ITSELF INTO THE COMMUNITY BUT NEITHER COULD IT ACCEPT EC ENTRY UNDER TERMS WHICH DENIGRATED GREEK NATIONAL DIGNITY.

4. PRINCIPAL OBJECTIONS RESITERED BY CARAMANLIS AT MEETING FOCUSED ON COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNSPECIFIED DELAY IN GREEK ACCESSION AND INTRODUCTION OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS INTO REPORT. WHILE THESE POINTS WERE NOT MADE PUBLIC, WE UNDERSTAND HE ALSO ARGUED FORCEFULLY THAT HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 01011 01 OF 02 031325Z

COMMITTED TO THE WEST AND EUROPEAN UNITY. AN EC REBUFF WOULD BE EXPLOITED BY THE LEFT IN GREECE, HE CONTINUED, AS COULD ALREADY BE SEEN FROM PUBLIC REACTIONS TO THE COMMISSION REPORT. HE ENDED WITH THE WARNING THAT IF THE COUNCIL FAILED TO OVERRIDE THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION AN INTERNAL PROBLEM WOULD ARISE IN GREECE AND IT WAS POSSIBLE GREECE MIGHT HAVE TO REEXAMINE ITS FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION.

5. PUBLIC REACTIONS CONTINUED TO BE EXPRESSED OVER THE WEEKEND. THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC LEFT (EDA) ISSUED A STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE COMMISSION'S REPORT AND ACCUSING THE EC OF SUBJUGATION TO THE US. THE COMMUNIST PARTY (INTERIOR) ATTRIBUTED THE COMMISSION'S ACTION TO US PRESSURE BECAUSE OF CYPRUS AND NATO, AND CALLED FOR A TURNING TOWARD SOCIALIST AND THIRD WORLD NATIONS TO ACHIEVE A POLICY OF INDEPENDENCE AND PEACE. THE COMBINED COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE EXPRESSED ITS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION. THE FEDERATION OF GREEK INDUSTRIES, A SUPPORTER OF EARLY ACCESSION, TERMED THE COMMISSION'S DECISION QUESTIONABLE, BUT ITS CERTAINTY THAT LONG RANGE CONSIDERATIONS WILL PREVAIL ON THE QUESTION OF GREEK ENTRY INTO THE EC.

6. THE MEDIA ATTACK LOST NOTHING IN VOLUME OR STING DURING THE WEEKEND AND BOTH CARAMANLIS AND THE US WERE SUBJECT TO SHARP ATTACKS. OPPOSITION, LIBERAL TO VIMA SAID THAT BEHIND THE "FRAGILE" ECONOMIC ARGUMENTS OF THE EC COMMISSION WAS A "FOREIGN DICTATED" (I.E. US) REJECTION OF THE GREEK APPLICATION UNTIL GREECE RESOLVES ITS DIFFERENCES WITH TURKEY AND RETURNS TO NATO. PRO-GOVERNMENT KATHIMERINI ATTRIBUTED THE NEGATIVE POSITION OF THE SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION TO THEIR DESIRE TO HELP BLACKMAIL THE GOG OVER CYPRUS, THE AEGEAN AND NATO, AT THE INSTRUCTION OF "KISSINGERIAN DIPLOMACY". PRO-PASOK ATHINAIKI TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION TO CONDEMN THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT FOR SELF-DELUSION, THE EC FOR BEING FOREIGN (US) DOMINATED, AND THE US, BY IMBBICATION, FOR INSPIRING THE BLACKMAIL OF GREECE ON CYPRUS AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 ATHENS 01011 01 OF 02 031325Z

RELATIONS WITH TURKEY.

7. FOR ONCE, RIGHT WING ELEFTHEROS COSMOS AND COMMUNIST (EXTERIOR) RIZOSPASTIS WERE ABLE TO AGREE AND CRITICIZED MR. CARAMANLIS FOR THE WAY HIS EC POLICY IS TURNING OUT. PRO-GOVERNMENT VRADYNI, CITING EC "BUREAUCRATIC PERVERSIONS", TERMED THE COMMISSION REPORT A TORPEDO AIMED AT GREECE AND EUROPE. LEFT-OF-CENTER AND ANTI-US ELEFTHEROTYPIA REFERRED TO AN "AMERICAN INSTIGATED REFUSAL", AND TO FAINT HOPES OF THE GOG THAT THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WILL CHANGE THE DECISION. AVGI (COMMUNIST PARTY INTERIOR) ACCUSED THE BIG ECONOMIC POWERS, ESPECIALLY GERMANY AND ENGLAND, OF PLAYING THE AMERICAN GAME AGAINST GREECE.

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 01011 02 OF 02 031314Z

46

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OMB-01 IGA-02 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 /089 W

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 1011

8. IN FACT, THE PRESS BECAME SO STRIDENT IN THEIR ANTI-AMERICAN ATTACKS THAT GOG FELT OBLIGED TO ISSUE TWO SEPARATE STATEMENTS OVER THE WEEKEND DISMISSING ANY US ROLE IN THE EC DELIVERATIONS, AND DENYING THAT THE PROPOSED US AID PACKAGE HAD STRINGS ATTACHED TO IT. AT GOG REQUEST, THE EMBASSY ALSO ISSUED A BRIEF DENIAL (SEE REF A FOR THE FULL TEXTS OF THE GOG STATEMENTS).

9. COMMENT: CARAMANLIS CLEARLY TOOK THE EC COMMISSION'S QUALIFIED ENDORSEMENT OF GREECE'S MEMBERSHIP

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 01011 02 OF 02 031314Z

APPLICATION AS A PERSONAL AFFRONT AND SETBACK "JOINING EUROPE" HAS BEEN A KEY FEATURE OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY SINCE HE BECAME PRIME MINISTER AND SOMETHING TO WHICH HE HAS DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME AND EFFORT. DURING 1975, FOR EXAMPLE, HE VISITED OR HAD MEETINGS WITH ALMOST EVERY EC MEMBER STATE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT AND ARGUED IN SUPPORT OF EARLY AND FULL GREEK ACCESSION, STRESSING THE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THIS FOR GREECE (TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY AND REINFORCE GREECE'S TIES WITH THE WEST). HE THOUGHT HE HAD COMMITMENTS OF SUPPORT FROM THE EC MEMBERS FOR GREEK ENTRY. THE COMMISSION'S REPORT THUS CAME AS A SHOCK TO HIM (WE UNDERSTAND GREEK AMBASSADOR TO THE EC STATHATOS HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN GETTING ANY ADVANCE INDICATION ABOUT THE TENOR OF THE COMMISSION'S OPINION). IN ADDITION, THE REFERENCE TO GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES IN THE OPINION CONSTITUTED A RED FLAG, NOT ONLY TO CARAMANLIS BUT TO ALL GREEKS.

11. THE PRIME MINISTER THUS SAW THE COMMISSION'S REPORT, AND THE REACTION IT CREATED IN GREECE, NOT ONLY AS A PERSONAL REBUFF BUT ALSO AS A POSSIBLE THREAT TO HIS POLICY OF TRYING TO BRING GREECE BACK GRADUALLY INTO CLOSE ALIGNMENT WITH THE WEST. HE ACTED QUICKLY (AND SOME MIGHT SAY HE OVERREACTED) BY CALLING IN THE EC MEMBER STATE REPRESENTATIVES TO MAKE THIS LATTER POINT CLEAR AND THROUGH THEM TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS. AT THE SAME TIME HE VERY MUCH HAD HIS EYE ON HIS POLITICAL OPPOSITION AND, IN PARTICULAR, ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, WHO HAS CONSISTENTLY ATTACKED CARAMANLIS' EC AND PRO-WESTERN POLICY. CARAMANLIS IS NOW OBVIOUSLY COUNTING ON THE EC MEMBER STATES, ACTING IN THE COUNCIL, TO PUT GREECE'S EC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION BACK ON THE TRACKS.

12. WE ARE RELIABLY INFORMED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS ALSO FURIOUS WITH ATTEMPTS IN THE PRESS TO LINK THE U.S. WITH THE COMMISSION'S ACTION. ON SATURDAY HE GAVE INSTRUCTIONS THAT A STATEMENT BE ISSUED DENYING ANY U.S. ROLE IN THE MATTER. WHEN PRESS SPECULATION AND CHARGES CONTINUED, HE GAVE INSTRUCTIONS ON SUNDAY FOR A FURTHER STATEMENT TO THE SAME EFFECT (REF A). IN
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 01011 02 OF 02 031314Z

VIEW OF THIS PERSISTENT DISTORTION OF THE U.S. ATTITUDE

ON THE MATTER AND BECAUSE OF QUERIES WE WERE RECEIVING,
THE EMBASSY ISSUED A STATEMENT LATE FEBRUARY 2 CHARACTERIZING
THESE STORIES AS INACCURATE(SEPTEL).
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, REPORTS, PRESS COMMENTS, MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ATHENS01011
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760040-0632
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760289/aaaadaoi.tel
Line Count: 281
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ATHENS 979, 76 ATHENS 942, 76 ATHENS 916
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <24 MAR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GREEK-EC RELATIONS: GOG PROTEST TO EC AMBASSADORS AND GOG DENIAL OF ALLEGED US ROLE IN COMMISSION REPORT
TAGS: PFOR, GR, US, EEC, (CARAMANLIS)
To: STATE EC BRUSSELS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006